



Functions of Communication in Modern Business Organizations

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ABSTRACT

Competition has been increasing in this era of global business and organizations want and need the people who communicate effectively. Organizations must be aware of enhancing the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills and overcoming the barriers of employees to have effective business work. This article focuses on the multi-dimensional roles that communication plays in modern business organizations for the purpose of effective administration. The purposes and functions are elaborated in detail to present the idea of handling the communication tactfully exploiting its various functions for the desired effect. After all, the basic aim of communication is to use the right words at the right time for creating the right effect.

KEYWORDS: Business Communication, Importance, Functions in modern Business

Business Communication is used to promote a product, service, or organization; relay information within the business; or deal with legal and similar issues. It is also a means of relaying between a supply chain, for example the consumer and manufacturer.

In business, the term "communication" encompasses various channels of communication, including the Internet, Print (Publications), Radio, Television, Ambient media, Outdoor, and Word of mouth

There are several methods of business communication, including:

- Web-based communication - for better and improved communication, anytime anywhere...
- Video conferencing which allow people in different locations to hold interactive meetings;
- E-mails, which provide an instantaneous medium of written communication worldwide;
- Letters, Reports - important in documenting the activities of any department;
- Presentations - very popular method of communication in all types of organizations, usually involving audiovisual material, like copies of reports, or material prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint or Adobe Flash;
- Telephoned meetings, which allow for long distance speech;
- Forum boards, which allow people to instantly post information at a centralized location; and
- Face-to-face meetings, which are personal and should be succeeded by a written follow-up.

Let us see how business communication differs from general communication.

Business	General
# Occurs in business context. Normally conveys facts or issues related to the business environment..	# Can take place in any context. May/May not convey a wide range of information.
# Has a business goal and the communication aims to achieve that. The goals might be to inform, persuade or promote goodwill.	# Can have any goal, including just completing merely a formality.
# Fixes responsibility	# No responsibility necessarily attached
# Presents information in a clear, condensed, precise and largely rule-bounded form.	# May/May not follow a rule-bound presentation. Formatting may be personal.
# Writing is oriented positively and tuned towards achieving a desired impact. Negatives are generally avoided. (There is no 'NO' in business communication).	# Writing need not necessarily be positively oriented or tuned towards an impact.

Why Communication in Business

Being successful in today's workplace is closely associated with your ability to communicate effectively with people inside and outside the

organization. Over the years, communication has played increasingly important roles in the success stories of numerous organizations. It is essential to understand the factors responsible for the growing importance of communication and feel why communication is important in any business organization.

Growth in the Size and Multiple Locations of Organizations:

Organizations are growing greater and greater in size. People performing in these organizations spread over different states of a country or over different countries. Getting in touch with them, sending across directions and getting feedback become possible only when communication lines are working effectively.

Growth of Trade Unions:

No management can go ahead without taking Trade Unions in confidence. This purpose can be well served only through effective communication between the management and the unions so that workers' problems can be understood and remedied.

Growing Importance of Human Relations:

Workers in an organization are not machines. They too have their hopes and aspirations. Every successful manager communicates with them as sensitive human beings. This helps achieve integration with them which always helps the organization.

Public Relation:

Every organization has a social responsibility, especially towards the customers, government, suppliers and the public at large. The organization can project a positive image of itself only by communicating with them seamlessly.

Performance and Competition Pressures:

Effective communication keeps all channels of information, orders, requests and complaints freely flowing, thus removing any unwanted obstacles in the production or performances process. This naturally boosts productivity within the same parameters, enhances performance and helps manage competition pressures.

Functions of Communication in a Business Organization:

In the organizational context, communication performs the following varied functions:

Transfer of Information
Offering/Seeking Advice or Suggestions
Persuasion
Imparting Training and Education
Issuing Orders and Instructions
Motivation
Warning
Improving Morale

1 Transfer of Information:

If communication is the lifeline of an organization, information is its lifeblood. So, ensuring a smooth flow of information across various

points in an organization is one of the main functions of communication. A number of activities within an organization depend on sending and receiving accurate, concise and complete information as enlisted below:

- Planning, controlling and organizing activities
- Assessing and forecasting present and future business trends
- Tracking rival companies and competitors in the market
- Assessing the social, political and cultural context of business operations
- Managing purchase, production and sale in the company
- Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of staff/employees
- Informing the employees about the policies, customs and objectives of the organizations
- Disseminating company plans, policies and results

2 Issuing orders and instructions:

An order passes on the directives of the management to the subordinates in an authoritative manner. An instruction, on the other hand, indicates precisely how the order is to be carried out. So an order can be formal or general in nature and an instruction has to be necessarily detailed, unambiguous and precise. Orders can be written or oral. Informal orders which require quick implementation are usually issued orally where as orders issued to employees situated far away are written, especially when they have to be issued in specific form. Written orders are also preferable for actions that are important, sensitive and required recording to facilitate future reference.

3 Offering/Seeking Advice or Suggestions:

An advice can be subjective opinion, guidance or recommendation usually offered with regard to a future action by someone superior, while a suggestion is normally received from a subordinate as an idea or plan put forward for consideration. An advice thus comes close to an order, while suggestion to a feedback. Manager normally seeks expert advice from specialists in different fields like...finance, marketing, R & D, public relations, whereas it is usual practice in many organization to invite suggestions from lower level employees on a regular basis through a feedback system. Suggestions also come from a number of standard devices of upward communication that includes reports, demands and complaints.

4 Motivation:

Motivation is an inner force that drives us to fulfill our objectives. In an organizational context, it would imply a set of measures that impel the employees to work more effectively towards achieving organizational goals. Effective communication helps build up a trustful and transparent environment which also helps in motivating the employees.

5 Persuasions:

It is the process of inducing someone to do something through reasoning or argument and that makes it an important function of business communication. Persuasion helps mould the attitudes, opinions, thoughts or beliefs of customers, workers or managers. This helps the

persuader fulfill his/her desired objectives in relation to these persons by inducing a desired behaviour in them. Thus, persuasion helps the salesman sell his product, the manager acquire the consent of the workers on an issue the workers may have initially resisted and the worker convince his manager to accept a demand that may have been rejected earlier.

6 Warning:

A warning is a forceful means of communication through which we inform a person of a possible or impending problem, danger or unpleasant consequences in the future. For example an electricity company issues a warning before disconnecting electricity connection of your house and Trade Unions issue a warning before calling for a strike. Warnings can be in the forms of notices (legal or otherwise), memos, letters, court orders, etc. In an organization, a manager finds this function of communication useful in case of dealing with an employees who are habitually late, negligent or do not abide by the rules, regulations and norms of the organization. It helps not only to improve the behaviour of the person but also to humiliate or punish him/her in extreme cases.

7 Imparting Training and Education:

Education is a long process of formal or informal communication that ends with a partial or complete transference of knowledge from the teacher to the learner. Training on the other hand, teaches a person a particular skill or type of behaviour through regular practice and instruction. Neither education nor training can progress without effective communication and no organization can survive or grow without continuous training or education to its employees. As the multi-skill employees abreast with the latest developments in technology and processes has grown, both these activities have emerged as some of the most important functions of communication.

8 Improving Morale:

Morale refers to the level of person's or group's confidence and spirits and therefore has a direct bearing on the functioning and efficiency of an organization. It clearly impacts the employees' attitude towards his/her organization or work. A manager can improve the morale by opening channels of communication, creating healthy work environment appreciating the performance of an employee through effective communication skills

To sum up, many surveys have indicated that communication is inevitable in business. One of such surveys is one conducted by Robert Half International of the 1000 largest employers in the US. This study found that 96% of the executives reported that today's employees must have good communication skills to get ahead. A recent study has also indicated that there is correlation between communication and income. Competition has been increasing in this era of global business and organizations want and need the people who communicate effectively. Organizations must be aware of enhancing the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills and overcoming the barriers of employees to have effective business work.

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